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US 446 P. 3

73d. March, 1871.





1

# STORIES OF THE REVOLUTION.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE LOST CHILD OF THE DELA-  
WARE; WHEATON AND THE PANTHER, &c.

---

Go little trait of that eventful war,  
When freemen won the day with many a scar,  
Add a brief page to your country's fame,  
Earn'd on fields of blood, when Britain came  
To crush the foliage of that beauteous tree,  
The holy emblem of a nation free.

"Glean up the fragments," that nothing be lost,  
And shew the next ages what liberty cost.

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*Truth is better than Fiction.*

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BY JOSHUA PRIEST.

*Now first published.*

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1855 June 13  
Gift of Samuel A. Green, LL.D.  
of class 1851

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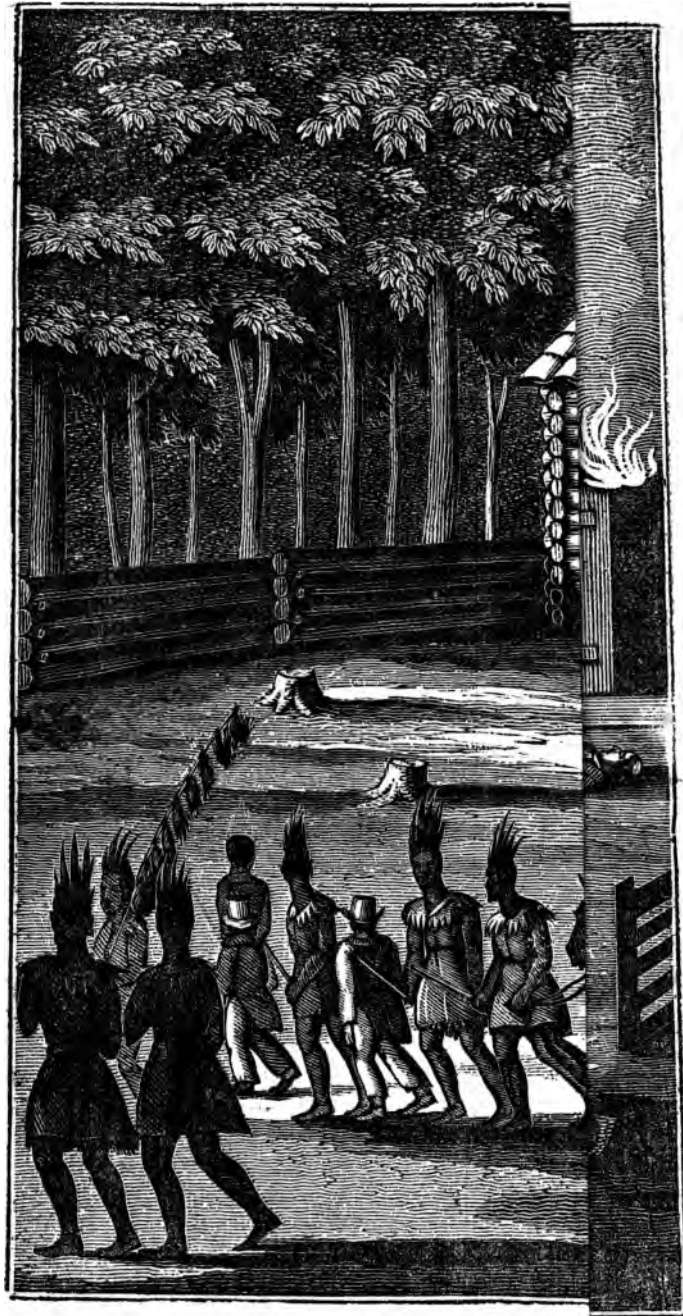
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THE above Engraving exhibits a view of the **BEAVER DAM**, some twenty miles west of Albany, called the **BEAVER DAM**, some twenty miles west of Albany, *show them moving off from the scene of devastation above, which are seen bursting out from the windows, roofs, and calps of such as they had killed, strung out at full length on*

## STORIES OF THE REVOLUTION.



### THE CAPTIVE BOYS OF RENSSELAERVILLE—JOHN AND ROBERT BRICE.

The parents of these children had migrated from their native country, Scotland, in the year 1774, and settled in an entire new place, twenty-two miles west of the city of Albany.

At this place a few families had chosen a residence, which was then called Van Rensselaer's Patent, but now Rensselaerville. Here a few log houses were erected by the new comers—the pioneers of a population which has since magnified in wealth and numbers, beyond the most sanguine expectations of these isolated back-woodsmen.

The war of the Revolution had raged with various success, for about four years, when reports of the depredations of marauding parties, composed of Tories and Indians, in and about the precincts of Old Schoharie, reaching the hitherto unmolested society of Rensselaer-Patent, which threw the defenceless inhabitants into fear and perplexities, as yet to them unknown.

At a distance of some eight or nine miles from the home of the boys, at a place called the Beaver Dam, was a Grist Mill, where the inhabitants resorted to get their grinding done. The Beaver Dam was even then, comparatively, an old settled place; but had escaped the vigilance of the ruthless Indians, and Tories, till the affair of which we are about to give an account took place, after which they built a Fort and stood on their defence.

Between the little neighborhood of the boys parents, and the first house, on the way to the Beaver Dam, was a deep woods of about six miles distance. This first house was that of Johannis Deitz, where John Brice, the eldest of the two boys was at work, helping them thresh out their wheat. This family consisted of eight persons, the old man and his wife, his son and his son's wife, with their four children, which were very young. The parents of the boys, who are the subjects of the following story, at a certain time having got out of bread, enquired of Robert, the younger of the two, who was then eleven years old, whether he could go to the Beaver Dam for the first time, to mill. To this he replied that he could, and the more easily, as at the same time three other lads, who were older, were going on the same errand, to the same place.

Accordingly, early in the morning, the horse and the grain were got ready, and the lad Robert set thereon; when a few hours trotting and chatting along brought the little group safely to the place of destination; where they procured the grinding of their grain. But the day, by that time was too far spent for them to reach their homes before dark, on which account they came to the resolution of staying at the miller's house until the next morning. The long woods which must be passed, was the chief reason of this arrangement. Little Robert was, however, an exception to this plan, as he thought he could easily go toward home as far as to the place where his brother was at work.

The miller having placed his bag upon the horse, and seated him safely on it, he started off alone. While, as he slowly made his way along the newly made road, he thought of the war, of Indians, and of dreadful things undefined, such as children are capable of, especially when some way from home, and

night coming on. Now and then the bounding of a rabbit across the road, or the sudden flutter of a partridge, made him start with fear for a moment, as the woods were darkening with the approach of night.

It was near the commencement of twilight, the last beams of the descending sun were flashing their golden glare among the peaks of the mountains, trembling for a brief moment on the placid face of a western sky, when he had nearly reached the gate, which hung across the road near the house where he intended to have slept that night; a step or two more and he would have dismounted, in order to swing open this gate to reach the house; but at that moment a tawney Indian, horribly painted, who had lain hid beside the road, among some old logs, rose suddenly up and seized the bridle of the horse, without saying a word, or seeming to notice the boy at all. The gate he flung open, leading the horse directly toward the house. But in passing the barn door, what was the boys terror, in addition to what the Indian had already inspired him with, when he beheld old Mr. Deitz lying there, weltering in his blood. This was not all; between the barn and house, which stood in a line with each other, he saw, in a similar situation, the wives of old Mr. Deitz, and son, with four small children of the latter, and a servant girl, (eight persons,) all smoking in their newly shed blood; which had as yet scarcely cooled in the evening air. He now perceived the house to be full of Indians, hedi-ously painted; busily, and silently employed in carrying out its contents—provisions, clothing, &c. In casting his eye around, he beheld at a little distance from the house, his brother John and Captain Deitz, the son of the old man, tied to a tree prisoners of war.

The Indians had now nine horses in their possession, four had been obtained from the Deitz family, four from his son-in-law, although a tory, and one from the boy. On these they laid their plunder. The work of death and robbery being now accomplished, they hurried away with horses, baggage, prisoners and all, directing their course toward the place where the parents of the two captive brothers lived.

They had gone but a little way from the scene of butchery, when hearing a crackling noise behind them, the lads looked back and saw the house, barn, and out-houses, all in flames. Four or five miles were now pursued by the Indians, directly along the way that led through the six mile woods, and nearly to the spot where the parents of the boys lived, when they suddenly turned out of the road into the woods, where, after a short time on account of its being too dark, they encamped for the night.

Here, the first night of their captivity, they slept within a mile of their parents, in the arms of savages, while those parents, unconscious in their slumbers, that their sons were on their dismal road of captivity, knew it not.

As soon as the grey light announced the morning, the Indians, nimble as the wolf, sprang up from their lair, eat a hearty breakfast of the food they had plundered, and then resumed their flight. Their progress was slow through the woods, occasioned by the bulkiness of their baggage, while they directed their way toward the head waters of the Catskill Creek, sleeping that night somewhere in the neighborhood of what is now called Potter's hollow, a few miles southwest of of Oakhill, Green County, N. Y.

From this place they again set off in the morning toward the Schoharie river, and having nearly terminated the second days journey, in ascending to the height of land, aiming to reach the river above Middleburgh, when all at once the Indians appeared to be greatly alarmed. At this particular juncture they had just entered an old field where was a deserted log house, at which it is probable they had intended to have slept that night. But instead of doing so, as the boys had hoped they would, they suddenly put their horses on a gal-

lup, and seemed desirous of reaching the side of the field on their left hand, the margin of which lay along the base of a steep and heavily timbered mountain.

News, it appeared, had reached the garrison at Schoharie, of the outrage committed not far from the Beaver Dam, and knowing the course the Indians always took, in leaving the country, a scouting party in pursuit, had intercepted them at this place. They had scarcely commenced their hurry to reach that side of the field, when the report of musketry in the woods below them, was heard to speak in vengeful peals, echoing among the caves, and along the broken ranges of the hills of Schoharie, in the brief rattle of successive volleys.

The cause of their alarm was now explained to the boys, for the keen eye of the Indians had discovered them before a shot was fired, when on looking that way they saw the woods alive with men, but too far off, as yet, to do much execution.

At the verge of this field, being obstructed in their course both by a fence and the steepness of the mountain, they were compelled to abandon their horses, plunder and all, the three prisoners and eight scalps excepted, and flee into the woods on the side of the ridge, where was offered the *only* hope of escape from the fury of their pursuers; yet even this could not have availed them any thing, had it not been so near dark, which now closed in and hid them as a gang of wolves in the fastnesses of the mountain.

If they had not been disturbed in their course, their intention was to have availed themselves of the warriors path on the Schoharie river, leading to the place called *Brake a bin*, from thence to Harpersfield, and so on to the Susquehannah, the Chemung, Genesee and Niagara.

As soon as it was day, having slept that night without fire, they set forward again, much cast down in their mind, pursuing the range of the mountain till some where near *Gilboa*, they crossed the creek, and so passed on through the woods to Harpersfield; from thence to the Charlotte river, coming to the Susquehannah at McDaniels Mills, since so called, and thence onward down the river to the Ochquago.

Having now lost all their provisions, they were immediately exposed to the horrors of hunger, and no way to relive themselves, as they did not dare to shoot any game, lest their tell-tale guns should report them to their pursuers. Three days and nights they were compelled to subsist on nothing except what the bushes might afford, wintergreens, birch bark, and now and then a few wild berries.

Captain Deitz was a peculiar sufferer, more so than the lads, as suspended from a stick were the aged scalps of his father and mother, his wife and the four bloody memorials of his babes, adorned with the half grown hair of their infant heads. These were constantly in his view, and often slapt in his face by the poor untutored warrior. What from the pain of a broken heart, and the concomitant sorrows of captivity, Captain Deitz died at Montreal, among his enemies, sinking to the grave as a fair pine, whose towering foliage had beat the bosom of the unconscious earth, when the levelling axe, which had lain at its root, had done its office.

But on the third day when not far from the mouth of the Unadilla river, which empties into the Susquehannah a little below Sidney bridge, they shot a deer, when they built a fire, sliced in pieces, cooked and devoured the animal. At the mouth of this river the Indians considered themselves out of the region of danger, consequently travelled more at their leisure, stopping frequently several days at a time, to hunt: killing deer, partridges and wild turkies, so that they suffered no more for provisions during their journey to Canada, by the way of the Chemung and the Genesee.

At such times as they went out to hunt a day, intending to return by night,

the Indians always bound Captain Deitz and Robert's brother to a tree laying them flat on their backs with their legs a little elevated to a limb; in this uneasy posture they were compelled to suffer till their return.

On a certain day, early in the morning, the Indians were observed in close counsel, the meaning of which was soon made known to the prisoners; a separation was about to take place. This measure was occasioned by the lameness of the Indian who was the owner of Robert Brice, having received a shot when pursued in the field, through the fleshy part of his leg, slightly grazing the bone, which continued to cripple him more and more till he could not travel as fast as his companions.

The poor boy was now separated from his brother and Captain Deitz, the only persons with whom he could converse about his father and mother, or who could in the least sympathize with, and pity his sufferings, was left behind with his lame master and two other Indians. It was a long time before they reached the Genesee or Indian country, after their separation, having lingered much on account of his master's lameness.

The first intimation that they had arrived within their territory, was the yells which they uttered, and the responses they received from a great distance, which they continued till within sight of each other.

But here commenced a trouble to the poor boy which he had not anticipated; for the Indian children about his size and age, immediately fell upon him pell mell with their fists and whips, making themselves immense sport and frolick, to see him jump about and cry. He naturally fled for protection to his master, but obtained none from that quarter; not knowing this to be a custom and a privilege allowed the Indian boys, whenever a prisoner was so unfortunate as to be brought among them. His next resort was to fly as fast as he could to a hut, although full of the ruthless monsters, full grown Indians, all laughing at his trouble, he sprang in among them, trembling pale and bleeding, when his pursuers desisted. Here they staid some time, when they again set off, he knew not whether, nor where the end would be, but whenever they approached an Indian settlement, the same ominous yells were renewed, when the same sort of persecution again befel him; but as necessity at first had taught him to fly to a hut, so he now had learned from the event to press forward with all his power to the door of the first wigwam which offered to his view, never being repulsed on his entry.

Four times in passing from one settlement to another, he experienced this sort of treatment, without the least interference of his master to save him from it; which custom at one time had nearly cost him his life. An Indian lad considerably larger than himself, who ought, even according to *their* notions of dignity of manners, to have known better, knocked him down with a club, but he sprang up, and soon found the accustomed asylum, drenched in blood, which after entering, no one any more at that place attempted to molest him.

At length the three Indians came to a place called the Nine Mile Landing, on Lake Ontario, where was the home of his master. Here they shaved his head and adorned it with feathers, and painted him after their manner, intending to bring him up as an Indian, taking him with them on their fishing and hunting parties, initiating as fast as possible the child into their modes of living.

Several weeks had passed away at this place, when his master in company with several other Indians, taking him with them, went to Fort Erie, opposite where Buffalo now stands, where, being noticed by a Captain of a vessel, a Scotchman, he bantered the Indian for the purchase of the boy. A bargain was struck at fifteen dollars, which redeemed him from a life of perpetual savageism.

From this time he saw his Indian acquaintance no more, going immediately with his new master, the Scotch Captain, to Detroit. Having now for the first

time since coming from Scotland seen a vessel, and having sailed in one the length of the Lake, supposed that if he should have to continue with his Captain a sea-faring life, thinking that it was the ocean on which he was, that all opportunity would be forever lost of returning to his parents again, which, to accomplish, was the object of all his thoughts both night and day. On this account he contrived a plea to be left at Detroit, to which his master consented. He was placed in the care of one Parks, who was also a Scotchman, till called for by his original owner, who purchased him of the Indian. At this place he remained till the peace of 1783, when according to the articles of that peace, the prisoners of both countries were to be sent, each to the nearest place on the frontiers of their respective countries, from whence they might reach their homes.

The news of the peace had reached Detroit, when all was joy and clamour among the captive Americans ; and, among the rest, little Robert's heart beat *high* with the expectation of once more being pressed to the bosom of his father and mother, who for a moment had never been out of his mind, from the hour in which the Indian first seized his horses bridle. But what was the consternation of the poor boy when his master told him he was not included among those who were to go to the states ; as that he had purchased him of the Indian during his life, and surely it were better to belong to a white man, one of his own countrymen too, than to be the slave of an Indian forever.

But, however this argument might seem to claim the gratitude of Robert Brice, yet it was not powerful enough to divest him of the one *all absorbing* wish of his heart, a return to his parents. But what should he do ; his Captain was peremptory, there was no hope ; dark clouds of despair, began to settle down on the bright prospect, which had but an hour before risen to his view—his country, father, *mother*, and long lost home.

But while weeping and musing on the dolefulness of his lot, the thought flashed across his mind, I will run and tell the British commanding officer about it ; which he did all bathed in tears, when the General said it should not be so, for the peace articles made no such exceptions. Then you might have seen the little Highlander's countenance brighten, as if he were leaping among the crags and mountains of his own native Scotland, he threw himself among his fellow captives, and was soon launched away on the bosom of the Lake that was to waft him toward his home.

The vessel soon moored at Fort Erie, where he had been purchased from the Indian ; from this place they sailed down the river to *Fort Slushey*, in a *Batteaux* ; from thence to *Fort Niagara*, at the upper end of Lake Ontario. Here to his great joy, he found his brother, who he had not seen since they were parted in the woods, near the mouth of the Unadilla river, where they shot the deer. The number of liberated captives, men, women and children, amounted now to about two hundred person. From Fort Niagara they were sent down to the lower end of the Lake, where they embarked on the St. Lawrence, running down the *long sues*, a place of great danger, on account of the rapids ; and so on to Montreal. From Montreal across the St. Lawrence to *Laparara*, thence to *St. Johns* in carts, from St. Johns up Lake Champlain to *Skeensborough*, now Whitehall ; from thence to *Albany*, a distance from Detroit, the place of starting of about a thousand miles.

News soon spread over the country that all the prisoners from the Canadas were on their way to the states, and on a certain day about two hundred would arrive at Albany. Among these the eldest of the two captive brothers, was expected to arrive, having frequently heard by means of the tories, that he was alive and well at Fort Niagara ; but as for the younger one, poor little Robert, there lingered not a hope of his return, or scarcely that perchance he might be



yet alive, among the savages, somewhere in the boundless wanderings of the Indian nations.

Early on the morning of that day the mother's heart was *first* awake, when she roused her husband, saying, "Come let us rise John, you know he is at Albany by this time if he is yet living. Oh make haste and fetch him." Here she burst into tears, it was a *mother's* soul in its longings for her son. He sprang from the bed, for the father's heart was not a whit behind in the holy passion, though kept more within bounds; yet a tear or so was often seen to tremble on the withered cheek of the hardy Scotchman. He took a hasty breakfast, while the mother's eye followed him as he mounted his horse, and trotted out of her sight towards Albany.

The distance was soon measured, while the musings of *hope* and *fear*, filled up the time. Somewhere in the *Colony*, in the city of Albany, was situated the house, where the glad company of liberated captives were to make their halt. At this house old Mr. Brice expected to find his son John.

Having come within sight of the Inn, he perceived a great crowd of soldiers, citizens, women and children, running this way and that; some with tears trickling down their cheeks, and others laughing for joy. He soon came among them, almost fearing to make the inquiry for *his* son.

He alighted and fastened his horse; when coming in contact with a person whom he knew from his dress was one of those who had returned from Canada. he made the inquiry, as his heart rose to his mouth in spite of his manliness, "De ye ken is there one John Brice, a mere lad wha has come along wie ye from Canada?" "Oh yes," answered the man, "two of them, brothers; one is a little fellow. Here, come along with me." He followed all in a tremor, musing in his mind, "My God, can it be that *both* my children are here." "There they are," said the man, "are they the lads you wanted?" "Yes," he shouted, when the three were folded together in the ardent grasp of father and sons. "O ye pure things, ha ye come again, yer mithers heart wie brake o gladness, wha she sees ye coming wie me."

He now started for home, putting the boys on the horse, while he walked by their side, talking all the way, of their sufferings among the Indians.

It was late in the evening when they came within the precincts of the well remembered little neighborhood, which the boys had left three years before. All was fresh in their memory as if but an hour had elapsed. They pointed out in the dark of the evening, as they went along, who lived there and there, when they left it, one for the mill and the other to work for old Mr. Deitz. Not a soul of the neighborhood had laid down to sleep, but all had assembled at the house of John's parents, to await his coming. So eager were they to know the worst or best, as it might turn out to be.

At length the neighing of the horses which had been parted all day, announced the coming of the most wretched or the most fortunate of fathers. They now all ran to the door, except the mother, who dare not, lest she should be disappointed. She staid back untill the sound of voices struck her ear, as the well remembered ones of her children, although now much altered. In an instant she burst beyond them all, crying as she grasped them in her arms, "O Johnney, O Robert, ha ye come agin to yer pure mither; God on high be thanked for iver and iver, for so great a mercy;" crying all the while as loud as she could roar for joy, while the old neighbors well known to the boys, gathered around them as they pressed into the door together, asking a thousand questions about their captivity; how they were taken—if they had suffered—and of the Indians; whether they were cruel, scarcely that night suffering themselves to sleep, so great was the joy, not only of the parents, but of all who witnessed their return.

Robert Brice, the younger of the two, is still living in Bethlehem, Albany County, N. Y., and is a respected citizen of the farmer class, of about sixty-three years of age, from whose lips we received this account.



## INTREPIDITY OF COLONEL JOHN HARPER,

*Related by Judge Huger of Schoharie*

McDaniel, a Tory Captain, in the year that Burgoyne was taken, had posted himself and associates on the Schoharie flats, a small distance above the bridge which now crosses the stream. The intention of McDaniel was to kill and plunder, although his men were badly armed; having but few guns, which, however, were substituted with dirks, knives, spears, and even sharpened sticks or poles; and knowing the inhabitants were without the means of defence, did considerable damage before the marauders could be decidedly dealt with.

At this critical juncture, when parents nor children were safe in their beds—when the property of fields and barns were exposed to midnight fires—when the unsuspecting traveller was frequently pounced upon, as by a wolf or panther, robbed and murdered—at such a time as this, it was necessary that aid from some quarter should be procured, or the whole population thereabouts must submit to the insolence and barbarousness of this agent of the British.

The only resort of the inhabitants was, as quickly as possible to flee to Albany and Schenectady, to solicit the proper aid, either to cut to pieces, or disperse this band of fraticides.

This hazardous undertaking was exactly adapted to the daring spirit of *John Harper*, which he promptly undertook to perform, although the Tories were in considerable strength on the road; especially at the forks where Vroman now lives, at the north end of the Schoharie flats, where the bridge crosses Foxen Creek.

A secret journey through the woods, not following any road, would doubtless have been the most secure from attack, but such an expedient the soul of Harper would not stoop to. He, therefore, determined on a more rapid, as well as a more heroic method of effecting his purpose.

The sun was retiring in glory beyond the towering *peaks* that skirt Schoharie river, on the western shore, from *Gilboa's* rapids, along the *Vroman lands*, to where the falls near the Mohawk sends up its spray, when Harper, dressed in the smooth brief habiliments of a *rifleman*, came on a beautiful courser, from the way of the *Clove* where he had been that day to see his family.

On leaping from the saddle, where he had sat an hour or two, in patriotic meditation, while softly winding his way from his home, among the lime quarries, and bushes that overhung the path, the burghers of Schoharie gathered around him in solemn, though earnest gratulations. While each and all together as earnestly as if but one had been there, cried, "O Harper, the tory McDaniel has come; there is the blaze of his fires," pointing to the curling smoke as it ascended in white columns above the trees; "*Hugar* and *Becker* have already gone to Albany, where we hope they will arrive in safety to-night, when by to-morrow evening we shall be enabled to quench those fires, and the lives of the scoundrels who kindled them." To all this he listened, while his eyes flashed the impression their words had made on his mind, when once for all he shouted, "*I will go to Schenectady*," and vaulted into the sad-

dle, from whence but a few minutes before he had lightly descended, and was directly out of sight.

It was dark when he had rode as far as an INN, which stood near where the Stone Church now stands ; here he halted for the night, desiring an upper room, with a lock and key, lights and refreshments to be placed on a table. All was complied with, when he entered, locked the door, lay his rifle, two pistols and a dirk near his person, sat down to eat. This finished, he took a seat beside the door, with an ear at the key hole, where he passed the dull hours in intense thought. All was silent till the "noon of night."

"Hark !" he involuntarily exclaimed in a whisper, fixing his ear still closer, not even breathing, when he heard the light tread of feet on the lowermost step of the stairs which led to his room. Now the fierce blood of his veins began its careering, a glance of his eye to the tools of death, when the low voice of some one speaking struck his ear : it was that of the *landlord*. "For heaven's sake, gentlemen, desist ; you know he is a soldier. I beg of you by all that is sacred, decline the attempt. Several of your lives will be lost, as he is terribly armed ; and why should *three* or *four* be the price of but *one* ?" He heard no more ; they were a party, doubtless, from the forks of the road. At length the day broke ; when he descended the stairs, not, however, without the utmost caution, lest an ambush might surprise him even in the house. The horse was ready, and away he flew, just as the light prisms of day began to streak the east.

But now a more fearful RUBICON was to be passed ; this was the bridge over *Foxen Creek*, the sentinel there, and the house where the Tories had possession. The slowly measured step of the guard was discovered by Harper at a distance through the grey mist of the morning, as he swiftly neared him on a full and fearless trot. He had reached the northern end of the bridge, when the sentinel, who nothing doubting but whoever he was on horseback, must be a friend, or he would not so carelessly and rapidly approach the very climax of danger, hailed him in the accustomed way, out of mere form, more than for any apprehensions of the stranger's true character ; and therefore did not even present his piece, but continued it in the position of an order, or standing by his side. The moment therefore that the word *stand* had passed the lips of the sentinel, Harper's rifle was cocked and presented, its dreadful muzzle nearly reaching the bosom of the astonished sentry, which motion was accompanied with this determined admonition, "Not a word from your lips, nor motion of your gun, or you are a *dead man*." All this time, which, however, was but a moment, Harper had only slackened his pace, from a trot, to that of a walk, continued to pass on, while he turned in his stirrups, with the deadly aim of his rifle at the breast of the petrified sentry, until he had gained the opposite side of the knoll, well known to those acquainted with the road, when he put spurs to his horse and was soon out of sight.

He had gained the distance of several miles on his road to Schenectady, congratulating himself that he had been wonderfully delivered in two instances from imminent danger ; when the sound of a horse's hoofs, not far behind, struck on his ear, in rapid pursuit. In a moment he faced about, and having the advantage of a turn in the road, saw across the distance, that he was pursued by an Indian, the noted murderer, *Sethen Henry*.

His rifle was again brought to the shoulder, cocked, and levelled ; when on coming round the turn the Indian found himself unexpectedly in the power of Harper, who he had pursued, as soon as informed by the sentinel at the bridge that he had passed, with the intention of killing him. The instant their eyes met, Harper in a voice of thunder cried, "Stand you villain, and face about, then

ride away with yourself, or the ball of my rifle shall whistle through your heart."

Sethen Henry's gun was in his hand, in the position of a *trail*, and not cocked : which he knew if he attempted to change would be the signal of his death. He therefore obeyed, and was soon out of sight, on the back track.

It may be asked, why did not Harper shoot him, as he had the opportunity ? He feared the *report* of his gun might advertise other opponents, every moment dreading the horrors of an ambush, and to kill one Indian was not so much an object, as to apprise the inhabitants of Schenectady of the position and depredations of McDaniel, who, in consequence of the exertions then made, was ousted and driven from Shoharie.



### THE ESCAPE OF COWLEY AND SAWYER.

*Sethen Henry*, the noted Indian named in the foregoing account, together with a brother equally murderous with himself, were ever on the alert to take captive and kill as many as possible of the whig party, not regarding women, children, nor even the aged, as the British paid the same price for scalps of every kind.

These two Indians, in company with two others, were prowling along the Delaware, knowing that Cowley and Sawyer were living somewhere in that region, now called Waterville. That these men were whigs was known to the Tories living near them, from whom Sethen Henry and his fellows derived their information respecting where they lived.

These were times when the Tories made their calculations how to speculate and make money by the destruction of their neighbors, as much as in clearing their land, or shooting the game of the woods, by the sale of their scalps and the plunder of their goods.

"I do not recollect," said the Judge, "in what particular manner these four Indians took Cowley and Sawyer prisoners, whether while asleep at home, or hunting in the woods, travelling together, at work in the field, or in the woods, but in some way they were taken and secured."

They immediately set off with their victims for fort Niagara, which was the grand resort of the Tories and Indians, and the place where Butler paid for scalps. They had travelled a week or thereabouts, so closely watching their prisoners by day and night, that as yet they had not had opportunity of *speaking* to each other. But on coming within range of the Indian country on the Genesee, their captors began to relax their severity in a considerable degree, loosening them from their cords, and sending them to cut and gather wood for their night encampments.

At such opportunities they used to exchange a hasty word or two in a low voice, respecting the means of escape. It was in the fore part of summer, so that they were enabled to get roots, buds and wintergreens to eat, suffering, however, much from hunger. The Indians had stolen a narrow axe at the time they took these men, which makes it probable they were at work in the woods. With this axe they used to cut their fuel, rendering it easier than to use a mere Indian hatchet.

They began also to relax a little that extreme care heretofore practiced in securing them while asleep, which was usually to lay one of them between two Indians, either tying them to their own bodies, or laying poles across them, sleeping on their ends, so that if they moved at all the Indians would awake.

.....

But now the time was becoming more and more precious, as that in a little while they would arrive among some of the tribes, from whom it would be still more difficult to get away, or they would be sold to the British at Niagara, from whose power it would be impossible to escape, till the end of the war, should they live to see that day.

According, one evening when they had stopped to encamp, and were told to gather wood as usual, they agreed that night to make the hazardous attempt; fixing upon their signal, or token, so as to act in concert. The axe before named, they contrived to lay down so near where they were to sleep as to be able to reach it if either of them should so prosper in their exertions as to want it. Observing also the exact spot where the Indians had laid their guns and hatchets, which was always near their heads, they lay down to sleep as at other times between their savage masters.

Here is a point the reader will perceive in which the human soul is wrought to its highest energies, just when the attempt was to be made, which would recover lost liberty, and sweep at a stroke the enemy from being; or, to fail and sink powerless to rise no more. Under such feelings, they continued to watch the breathing of the Indians, till near the hour of midnight, when, from the deep slow pulse which coursed their veins, it was evident that the time had come; the sign or token agreed on was reciprocated; this was a strong aspiration of the breath.

Now each at the same moment began to lift his head, and gradually to rise on one side, resting on the palm of the hand. In this position they waited a moment to listen; then another effort was made to draw their feet under them, so as to be able to stand in a squatting posture, which if they could but attain, it would be easy for them to spring, or rise erect without a noise. This they were so happy as to effect without awakening the Indians, and reaching to the axe and a hatchet, each aimed a deadly blow, when two of them were no more. A second attempt to destroy the other two, but neither of their blows took a deadly effect, on account of the distance they had to reach, though both the Indians were badly wounded. In an instant Sethen Henry, the leader, was on his feet, and finding a dreadful gash on his shoulder, fled from the contest; but the other was not quick enough to avoid a second blow, when he went the way of his fellows.

Cowley and Sawyer now each seized a gun, a horn of ammunition, and pouch of bullets, two hatchets, the narrow axe, and fled; making the best of their way toward the forts of Old Schoharie, where they arrived, when there was great rejoicing on their account.

"We gathered around them," said his honor Judge Hagar of Schoharie, of whom we received this account, "caressing them, feeling willing to carry them in our arms, so glad were we to see them again alive, and to think in what a heroic manner they had rescued themselves, if not from being burnt alive, yet from a long imprisonment among either the Indians or British."



## ESCAPE OF THE BRITISH INDIANS AT THE TAKING OF BURGOYNE.

There followed in the train of that overweening officer, *fifteen hundred* aboriginals of the northern forests, composed of various tribes, when he made with his scarlet legions, a descent into the heart of a country populous with

unconquerable patriots, with whose force and resources he had formed but small acquaintance, till the hour of his fall into their hands at the heights of Saratoga.

On that day which developed the decree of Heaven, in the captivity of the British army he had sent out the leader of those Indians with a scout at his command, to scour the surrounding woods and country, to learn, if possible, if the enemy were thickening around them. These sons of the forest as led on by their unvanquished Chief, pierced the woods in all directions, but silent as the light tread of a Panther when on the scent of its prey recognizing at every step, the well known *hunting* grounds of their *fathers*, who, at the approach of the wiser and more powerful, but hated white man, had fled to remoter wilds.

Vengeance, the red man's *soul*, at these recollections, was roused, beclouding their native gloominess of countenance, with a still deeper cast of sternness: thus to bespurned and driven from the dear haunts of infancy, where on the *Hudson's* umbrageous shores, they had lived in communion with the *deer* and *beaver*; these thoughts conjured up the genius of wrath, such as would have scalped a *world*, but was fated to subside along the raging veins of the sullen, but majestic Indian, unrevenged.

They had dispersed in different directions, not, however, so remote, as to be beyond the echo of the shrill whoops of their leaders, so that the sharp signal yell might fly as the feathered arrow, from one to another, till the whole great circle which had gone out from the camp at every point, might know in a moment, the wish of their Chief.

Not a vale nor distant hill, viewed from the tops of the tallest trees and eminences, or gulfs and dens, or tangled woods, escaped the vigilance of these lynx-eyed rangers.

But what was their dismay, when from every point it was perceived that thousands came rushing on, in one vast circle; from the blue hills that skirt the hardy Vermonter's home; from the South, where the Hudson pours along its northern waters; from the West, and all the region of the Mohawk; from the North, the very rout their army had traced, the sons of liberty came down, as the roar of many waters, ready to engulf in ruin the entire battalions of the British army.

This seen, the appalled, yet wary Chief, yelled once: the dire screech sunk fearful on all ears, as when a panther screams, save those of his trusty warriors, who in a moment drank in the sound as the chime of sweetest music, when suddenly and they stood in a circle round him, in silent, but keenly fixed attention. Warriors; death and ruin are near us—the army of Burgoyne is lost—the Americans are pouring in from every side, as if the Great Spirit is shaking the world of all its tribes of the pale-faced race: we must not be taken captives here on the very soil, once the wide spread hunting grounds of our ancestors. Burgoyne is already hungry, is terror stricken, but cannot see away. To be pointed at in the streets of Albany, and pelted with paving stones by the white poppooses, to hear it said, what are the *Indians* among them? could not the British *Crown* shade them from the blast of the American arms? this will be too dreadful for the ears of Indians; let us give the signal, and go to our homes in Canada.

A fierce glance of the eye, and the responsive monosyllable, Ugh, showed their Chief as he paused, their approbation of what he had said.

A wave of his hand as he stood in the tall attitude of native eloquence, when, as quick as the flash of their own tried rifles, they disappeared, or as a vapour, when risen a little above the ground is seen no more, having mixed with the clear, blue air of the vaulted sky.

A few moments now elapsed, when the Chief alone was seen standing on

a little eminence near the *marque* of Burgoyne. When that dismayed General cast his eyes that way, he beheld the well known Chief of his Indian allies, standing in the tall majesty of his own uprightness, waving silently his hand to the thousands around him. The motion of that hand was inimitable; rapid as the vibration of the tail of the rattlesnake, while it conveyed the double intelligence of the immensity of the enemy, and of certain destruction, a chill of horror was felt along the ranks—each exclaimed instinctively, all is lost.

This done, he staid not to be questioned, but disappeared; an hour had not numbered its rapid moments, when not an Indian of all the fifteen hundred, who had followed the boasting Briton, could be found; they had slid as so many spectres of darkness, from the sight of both armies; although hemmed in on every side—their homes in Canada next witnessed their presence.



#### STORY OF AN HESSIAN WOMAN IN THE CAMP OF BURG- GOYNE, WHILE LYING AT FISH CREEK, IN SARATOGA, WHICH TRANSPIRED A DAY OR TWO BEFORE HIS CAP- TURE.

The want of provision in the camp of Burgoyne, had now begun to be severely felt; the Americans had seized their last supply, which some boats contained; all resort to the country lying round, where tory friends were to be found, was totally cut off.

The insulted Americans had fenced them in as with a wall of vengeance, which could not be passed; famine had commenced its unnerving power, sickness was multiplied among the soldiery, fever attended with its deliriums, raved from couch to couch. Water, water, was the incessant cry.

And although the Hudson on the one side of the camp, poured along its silent waters, and the rapid stream of Fish creek roared sweetly in the ears of the sick and desponding forces, yet it was impossible to snatch a drop from these dreadfully guarded waters; an hundred bullets were sure to pierce whoever made the attempt, soon as they stooped to touch the silver current.

But such was their cries for water, of the sick and dying, that their women, moved by pity, were made superior to the dreadful crisis, (imagining that the Americans would not from gallantry of feeling, shoot a female,) snatched hastily their pails, and ran to the shores to try what the event might be.

Their opinion of the enemy, as it proved, with respect to their persons, was correctly formed, but their *pails* were doomed to a harder fate, for while they could not find it in their hearts to spill the blood of defenceless females, they were sure to riddle their pails as they hung from their hands, so that little or no water in this way could be procured.

In this dilemma, a faithful wife, who had left her native country for love of her husband, who was one of the unfortunate Hessians, sold by his government to the King of England for a certain sum a head, to fight in a cause the merits or demerits of which he knew nothing; this woman, as she moved from couch to couch, listening to the moans of the sick for water, suddenly resolved: I too will try, perhaps I may succeed to bring a little.

Her husband tried to dissuade her, but she persisted, her sympathies were strong, for as a kind and comforting angel, she had made it her business to hover over the diseased and wounded of her countrymen, (the Hessians,) all the while she had been in the army.

She sprang along the adventurous path that led to the dreaded shore, her husband following close as far as he dare—already she stood at the brink in full view of the guns on the other side, for a moment she cast an imploring glance that way, and then to heaven, for protection; her right hand had dashed the vessel deep among the humid waters; a struggle to clear the open shore, and reach the deeply shaded bank, had marked her agitated demeanour, when a ball aimed at her pail, struck, as she had stooped over the vessel *too* low, her angel bosom—the blood spouted and dyed the ground, before her quivering frame fell crimsoned in the gore of her faithful heart.

Her husband who had waited but at a short distance for her return, had not moved his constant eye from his all of earth, while within, his soul vibrated between the vast extremes of hope and despair, her screech struck his ear—reeling frame showed him that the shaft of death had cleft her heart asunder.

She had but touched the ground where she fell, when his arms enclosed her, dyed in blood spouting from her bosom; frantic with grief, he dreaded not the flash of the deadly rifle, but bore her to the camp, struggling in the pangs of dissolution, while he impressed on her fading forehead, the last kiss of fervent affection.

The grief of this man was respected, not a gun moved its trigger, hushed were the volleys of the sympathising, yet brave Vermonters; her *pail*, not her person, had been the aim of the distressed marksman, the green mountaineer.



## THE ESCAPE OF McKEAN'S SCOUTING PARTY IN OTSEGO COUNTY:

*As related by William McKown.*

Such was the perturbed state of the minds of the inhabitants, for a year preceding the burning of Cherry Valley, that their ordinary business was attended to, under the most painful apprehensions, not only of being attacked by a British force of Indians, but of being murdered in their houses and beds, by marauding parties of tories, painted and disguised so that even neighbours could not know each other.

But in order to live as securely as possible, they watched by day with their guns at hand, while they went on with the work of the fields, and at night when the weather would possibly admit, they slept in the woods, wives, children and all, in some place as hidden as could be contrived; securing their valuables as well as they could, the possession of which seemed to be the chief object of the tories, as well as that of their scalps.

At a certain time intelligence was received, that at the mouth of the Unadilla river, which is now the extreme southern boundary of the County of Otsego, a body of Indians had come from Niagara, and were fortifying that spot, as a place of general rendezvous, a depository of plunder, scalps, and prisoners.

A considerable reward was now offered to any person or persons, who would go and reconnoitre the place, ascertain their strength and numbers, and return with the intelligence.

Captain Robert McKean offered to go without a reward, if he might be permitted to select five men to accompany him in the dangerous enterprise.



The persons he selected, were Joseph Mayall, Azariah Halbert, Aaron Thompson, Nicholas Coonrod, and Robert McKown, father of the Honorable Judge McKown, Recorder of the City of Albany.

Arms, ammunition, and provisions being prepared, they departed with the blessings and prayers of the deeply interested inhabitants of Cherry Valley. We soon reached the foot of Otsego Lake, which is the head of the Susquehannah, where we choose to keep down on the east side of that stream as being the most unfrequented by the Indians, so that if they were already on their way up, we might not be exposed to meet them.

In following this course, we had not proceeded more than ten miles, when to our surprise we discovered the track of a white man, which was easily distinguishable from that of an Indian. Immediately we felt assured that our plan was discovered, and did not doubt but it was by the vigilance of a tory named Regnal, who lived exactly where the house now stands which was built by the noted Bowers, at the foot of Otsego, on the east side.

If this was a correct conclusion, then it followed that already the Indians at Unadilla point, whose position we were going to examine, were on the look out for us, and would doubtless endeavour to meet, captivate, and destroy us, so that we should not return with the desired information.

Our captain had been in the old French war, several years a prisoner among the Indians, and therefore knew all their manners and customs as well as any native among them. Accordingly we were on the look out, not suffering ourselves to speak above our breath, stepping as carefully as possible, lest we might tread on a dry stick and betray ourselves.

We had gone on about ten miles farther, which brought us as low down as where Colier's bridge now crosses the river, here we imagined that the Indians were possibly as cunning as ourselves and would doubtless take the most obscure way, and endeavour to meet us on the east side. On which account we waded the stream and struck into the woods, crossing the Indian path toward a place now called Craft town. McKean happening to be the hindermost man, had barely gone over the path, and was lingering a little to listen, when he distinctly heard the sound of feet. He then made motions to the nearest man, and he to the next and so on to squat instantly and not to stir as that there were evidently people of some kind now passing by on the course of the Cherry Valley.

After having squatted a long time, our Captain rose up and beckoned us together, stating that he would go alone to the path and endeavour to discover whether Indians or white men had now gone by and how many there were.

Accordingly he did, and following on till he came to a wet spot; he soon returned, saying, they are Indians, and not less than fifty in number. If we had been a minute or two later in crossing their path, we should most evidently have fallen into their hands, at a moment when we supposed every step was securing us more and more from such a calamity.

Now it was no longer necessary for us to continue our route to the Unadilla repository, as it was evident that the whole body of them were on their way to cut off the defenceless inhabitants of Cherry Valley, having doubtless received information of our situation by means of the man whose track we had discovered, supposed to be that of Regnal the tory.

The captain and his six men now clambered up a steep mountain exactly opposite that of the Crumhorn, probably very near where the saw mill is situated, a little above Colier's tavern on the Cooperstown road; and looking round, said to McKown, I am tired and cannot hold out much farther; there is a man by the name of *Sleeper*, living not far from this, but where I know.

not; will you McKown pilot us to this man's house, as you are more acquainted with these woods than I am.

He answered, the course to find his house will not vary much from that the Indians are now pursuing, and have no doubt but I can easily find it. Accordingly the sun was but about an half hour high when we arrived there. This *Sleeper* was a QUAKER, who, the moment he saw us, appeared much agitated, and groaning audibly, touched Robert McKown on the shoulder and took him one side, saying, is not your captain Robert McKean; I answered, yes. He then, on perceiving that we were whigs, knowing from information the character of McKean, exclaimed, My God *Robert* you must leave the house in a moment, or you are all dead men; for this very hour fifty-four Indians and Tories have called here to tarry all night, and are now only gone out to shoot something for their supper.

To this captain McKean replied, Daddy Sleeper your house *must* be my fort to-night. But the quaker used so many entreaties that they concluded not to stay there, but to go about a mile and a half to a deserted log house; the quaker faithfully promising not to betray them, which he did not. This man's counsel was God's providence and saved their lives.

On the next morning we moved as silently and as rapidly away as possible, but notwithstanding, the Indians were ahead of us, for on coming near the foot of the lake we discovered the smoke of the Indian's fires, where they had just breakfasted and gone.

Two of the strongest and most fleet among us was now selected to make their way as quickly to Cherry Valley as was possible, as our captain tired out, and alarm the inhabitants of the approach of the enemy. But this was useless, as that Colonel *Alden* had already arrived with a company of troops, which saved the place for this time; the enemy keeping aloof, killing here and there a family.

At length McKean and the rest of his party came in safe, thus ended the perilous expedition to Unadilla, which, as it happened, was of no manner of use, otherwise than out of it arises an exhibition of the intrepidity of character which marked the struggle of our forefathers in achieving the independence of our country.



### BRANDT'S FIVE PRISONERS AT THE MASSACRE OF CHERRY VALLEY.

The next year, on Wednesday the thirteenth of November, 1778, Cherry Valley was attacked and burnt. Seven hundred Indians and Tories, and British, were the perpetrators of this deed; who came from Niagara, by the way of the Chemung river, as described in Pachin's narrative, and so on up the Susquehannah, under the command of *Brandt* and *Butler*.

So sudden and unexpected was the onset, that it was impossible to notify the inhabitants, who, in time of danger could fly to the fort, but the gun, the report of which was known as the alarm gun, was employed in its first shot at the enemy. Many outrages horrible to relate, were committed here and there among the families, who, if they could have reached the fort would have been saved, as that was not burnt.

The wife of the Reverend Mr. Dunlap, a Presbyterian clergyman, was found dead, scalped, and an arm of her body hanging on the limb of an apple tree. A Mr. Hughey Mitchell, and his family, not having time to reach the

fort were all killed except himself, who fled to a hedge fence and there lay hid in full view of the butchery of his wife and children. The last of which was a little child about two years old, which on beholding the horrid faces of the Indians painted in the most frightful manner, turned away and caught hold of the leg of a tory's pantaloons looking up to his face for protection. But instead of shewing pity, and saving it, he spoke to an Indian standing near, to kill it, which he did at one blow of the tomahawk.

In the midst of the murdering and conflagration of the place, as Brandt was standing by the smoking ruins of a house just reduced to ashes, looking sharply about him he discovered, some eighty or an hundred rods from him, a house built with logs, which as yet had escaped the flames of the general ruin. Instantly he sprang across the field, and passed the woods which nearly hid it from common observation, and fearlessly entered in without compliment, or any such introduction. Here he found a woman alone with five children, the wife of a tory, who at that time was not at Cherry Valley, whose name I think best not to divulge; she sat spinning at the little wheel, in as composed a manner as if nothing was the matter, while the sharp ring of the rifle, with the loud blustering noise of the musket were tolling the death bell of her acquaintances.

Brandt being struck with her stupidity and indifference, exclaimed, My God woman are you spinning here, when everywhere your neighbors are murdered by the Indians. She replied, I did not think myself in danger, as we are the king's people; but now began to be alarmed, as possibly the Indians might not be able to distinguish; O if I could only see Brandt, he would help me. I am Brandt, said he but it is out of my power to aid you; as there are many Seneca Indians herewho are not under my control, and kill both friends and foes, not caring to make any distinction, as all scalps look alike to them, bringing the same price a Niagara.

All this was said in a moment, while she flew here and there, doing she knew not what; her feelings being quite lively, now that her precious self was in danger. Brandt said to her, take your children and cross that creek and hide in yonder bushes. But, while pointing her to the spot, five Seneca Indians came running that way; you are lost, said he, it is impossible for me to save you. She screamed, O must I and the children be murdered. Spring into that bed with your children and cover yourselves entirely over. She had scarcely done so, when the five Indians, the fiercest of their tribe, came up yelling and painted horribly. Brandt had placed himself at the door, with his back against one post and his foot against the other, with his hatchet stuck into the post above. You cannot enter here, said he to their chief, who was a monstrous Indian, there is no one here but a poor sick woman, and she is on the king's side. O yes, they are all on the king's side now, said the laconic chief, and rushed by into the room. I tell you, said Brandt, this woman who lies here sick, in that bed, has furnished me and my men with food many a time, and she shall not be hurt. Where then is her husband, said the warrior. He has fled, and gone across the creek; I thought I saw a glimpse of him, said Brandt, when I came to the door; at which the five Indians darted off in that direction, hoping soon to find him.

Now as soon as they were fairly out of sight, Brandt stepped out of the house and gave a yell as shrill as the scream of a panther. Directly there came running five of his own Indians to the house. Have you any paint, said he, that I may mark this woman and her children for my own. At first they said no, when, so great was the anxiety of the woman, that she sprang out of the bed, where she had laid hid, with inexpressible horror, while Brandt was deceiving the Seneca Indians, and offered to have a piece cut out of her cheek, arm or any where, so that she and her children might be marked with the blood.

But soon one of them said he had found a little, when the mark of Brandt was set upon them, of his own, which no Indian dare obliterate, which saved the woman and her children. This was humane in Brandt, notwithstanding she was on the king's side; as he might here have easily obtained six scalps which would have brought him forty-eight dollars at Niagara, or have given them over to the Senecas, for the same purpose.



### THE WONDERFUL PRESERVATION OF MRS. MOORE, WHEN A PRISONER AMONG THE INDIANS.

But such was not the character of *Butler*, Brandt's associate in this attack on Cherry Valley, although bred on the bosom of softer usages. An Indian under his command had taken prisoner a feeble old woman, and finding, after travelling awhile, that she could not hold out, having waded a creek which was deep, her clothes had become frozen, her limbs stiff with cold, so that she could not stand up, told her to prepare for death, as that he must kill her, because she could not go fast enough.

She plead for her life and begged to be carried to *Butler*, who she said would have mercy upon her. The Indian consented and taking her up, carried her to *Butler*, where the poor woman plead for her life, desiring to be permitted to return again to Cherry Valley. But the inhuman wretch replied, although streaming tears admonished him of the anguish of her soul, "let the Indian kill you and have the benefit of your scalp, you are old enough to die, what do you wish to live longer for," here he turned away from her.

The Indian not willing to loose the bounty, carried her again to the woods, saying as he went, that he must kill her, as she could not walk, and if he should let her go she would starve before she could reach Cherry Valley. Again she renewed her supplication to be carried to *Butler* once more; as she knew he would save her life it could not be that he would suffer her to be put to death when eight dollars would redeem her.

Again the Indian complied, and carried her to *Butler*; here she renewed the plea for her life, in all the eloquence that tears and trembling old age, worn down with fatigue and hunger could inspire, but was repulsed with the same brutal language as before.

Now the die was cast, hope had disappeared forever; the fogs and gloom of the grave began to gather round; the Indian snatched her up in anger, intending to make short work, as his patience was quite exhausted; but at this horrible moment, God appeared in his providence, a British Sergeant had mercy upon her, bought her of the Indian, carried her to Canada on his own horse, and thus she escaped the knife of her adversary.

This woman's name was *MOORE*, the sister of *Captain Harper*, the mother of *Jane Moore*, who at the same time was carried to Canada, courted and married by *Captain Powell*, of fort Niagara, as stated by General *Pachin*, in his narrative.

But retributive justice finally overtook this *Batier*; for, in a skirmish on Canada Creek, in Montgomery County, the year after the massacre of Cherry Valley with a party of our men from Otsego County, and some friendly Indians, he lost his life, in fleeing before them, as they proved too hard for him. He had, as he supposed, obtained a sufficient distance from the guns of the whigs, when, coming to an open place on a rising ground he turned round and in a very ridiculous manner insulted them by slapping his —— at them in ridicule. This

act was seen by a friendly Indian, who happened to be in advance of the pursuing party, and very near to Butler, when he heard him hallooing to the rebels as he called them, and saw his low-lived demeanor. In an instant the Indian took aim, and from his rifle which never missed its mark when directed right, flung a vengeful bullet exactly to the part of his body, which he had referred the whigs to in his ridiculous behaviour, which wounded him badly. He fell; the Indian in a moment was beside his victim, when Butler called loudly for *quarters, quarters*; Me give you *quarters*, said the Indian, Me give you *Cherry-Valley quarters*; when he began to hack him with his tomahawk in various parts of his body, till coming to his head he dispatched him at a blow. Thus ended the life of a traitor to his country, for it should not be forgotten that he was an American, brought up on the Mohawk river, but in the Revolution took arms against his country, under the auspices of Sir William Johnson.



### THE LOST CHILD OF THE DELAWARE.

Robert Mason, the father of the child which is the subject of the following account, was what is termed on the Delaware, among the lumbermen, a *steersman*. He had chosen a residence for himself and family, in a dreary region, far from any settlement, among the wild and broken mountains; out of which arise the head waters of the east branch of the Delaware. At the time his child was lost, which was May the 10th, 1807, he was from home, on a piloting voyage down the Delaware.

A half mile, or thereabout, from his house was a small clearing, which he used as a pasture. To this pasture, a larger son of his had taken a horse in the afternoon; when the sun was about two hours high. The woods intervened between the house and the pasture, so that the way, which was only an obscure path, could not be seen but a short distance; and besides, was intersected in several places, by the paths of cattle. The child, which was but about five years old, had attempted to follow its brother to this pasture, unperceived; but after going a little way wandered and became bewildered, as it still went on in a very dense and gloomy forest which lay along the base of a mountain, running in a southern direction. It was nearly sunset before its mother missed the child; when, looking round and not discovering it, became soon persuaded that it was lost. Alarm and distress at once marked her features and actions. She flew here and there, filling the woods with her cries, calling the little fugitive; but no trace of its feet, nor sound of its voice could be seen or heard. The family had run everywhere around about the house and clearing, till near sundown in vain; when night came on which placed the life of the little wanderer in a perilous situation, on account of wild beasts and precipices; which dangers were magnified in a most terrifying manner in the prolific and frightened mind of the mother. She now sent her eldest boy to the nearest neighbor; which was a distance of a mile or two, to alarm them; and from thence others went on to the next; when got together went to the house of the child's parents; and heard the story as it was. When this was done, two persons were dispatched that night, one to Walton, and one to Delhi, villages on the Delaware river; being each about fourteen miles distance, from where the child belonged. Their object in doing this was to request a general *turnout*, in search of the lost child; which was no sooner done, than the news flew in all directions through those villages, when every citizen, feeling the workings of sympathy, soon were gathered round the messengers, to hear more particularly, the true state of the case. This understood, they were unani-

mous in the enterprize, although it was then about midnight. Each man took his gun and ammunition, as the woods abounded with wild animals—wolves, panthers and bears. They took also provisions, not knowing how long the hunt might be continued, before they should find the child, or be compelled to give it up. Being thus equipped, they started off on foot, and arrived at the place of destination about day-light, amounting in number to two hundred persons. Here they found the distressed mother, who had not slept a moment during the whole night. From her they learned the direction it had probably taken, in attempting to follow its brother and the horse to the pasture. They now concerted means the most effectual, to scour the immense wilderness, which lay between them on the one side of the road, and a mountain a mile or a mile and a half distant. From the house eastward, they ranged themselves along on the *new* road to as great a distance, as their numbers would allow, placing each man two and three rods apart. In this manner, about sunrise, they entered the gloomy woods; occupying, in a line, nearly a mile and a half distance.

As they proceeded, every dark recess was strictly examined, the trees that were hollow, standing or fallen, were thumped upon—the bushy tops of hemlocks and other trees were not passed unnoticed—supposing it not impossible but the mangled limbs of the child, might be found hanging from the branches of some tree, carried thither by the teeth of the panther. The company had agreed not to fire a gun unless the child should be found but to proceed as silently as possible. This was strictly observed, while they pursued their way with all the anxiety, so trying an occasion could inspire; each one being anxious to have the honor, as well as the happiness, of finding the little wanderer. In this manner they penetrated to the foot of the mountain, but no trace of the child was discovered. They were now compelled to return to the wretched mother without her son; whose cries and moans were uttered in a most piteous manner, forcing tears from the eyes of the most stout hearted. Immediately the company arranged themselves anew, to search the woods on the other side of the road, till they should reach the top of a ridge, about the same distance from the house as the other, but not so high, and difficult of ascent. The same order and method of examining the woods, were observed in this attempt, as well as in the other. By this time all the women, for several miles, living between the house of the lost child and the two villages, had arrived there out of sympathy; which added to the former company about thirty persons. These, however, did not accompany the others in scouring the woods, but remained about the neighborhood of the house, searching ever heap of old logs, pond hole, brook and spring, where it might hide itself, or have died with cold, for the weather, although it was in May, was chilly in the night, as on the mountains there was in many places, patches of snow.

On the side of the road which they were now about to commence searching, ran a blind path, which passed down into a dreary valley, and then ascended through a notch in the ridge, and so passed over to a small settlement, several miles distant on the other side. They had determined, after having examined the woods on one side of this path, to the very top of the ridge, to return down again on the other side to the place of starting, and then, if the child was not found to take *new* ground, and to continue the search till it should be found dead or alive.

They now proceeded, after having extended their line, to examine with all possible caution and diligence every place in those woods; prying into gulphs and caves, hidden recesses, tops of trees, &c. as in the beginning. But no trace of the child was found in all the distance, to the foot of the ridge, where they halted awhile to listen, then commenced ascending it; which

in many places, they found very steep and difficult. They now frequently halted to listen, which was done through the whole line by a given token, previously agreed on, and going out each way from the centre, by the captain of the forces, for the sake of order, and to act in concert, hoping by this means, to catch the voice of the child in its wailings, if it was yet alive. During one of these halts it was imagined, by several that they heard its voice in the distance above them, when they again rushed forward, at the signal to march, scrambling as fast as possible up the slippery sides of the hill. But a minute or two now elapsed, when exactly in the course of a Mr. Barsley, the nearest neighbor of the woman, they came suddenly upon the poor little sufferer, laying with one side of its face in a puddle of snow water. But it was evident that it had not been in that condition but a very short time, or it must have died. It had according to its own account, afterwards given by itself, heard a great noise in the woods below, which frightened him, when he got up from where he had sat down, and tried to run, but from weakness and numbness fell down over a limb of a tree against which he stumbled, and from which he could not recover, but lay, in expectation of being killed, with its face in the water as stated above. The great noise which had alarmed him was the trampling of the men, who were looking for him. Immediately the signal gun was fired, by which it was known that the child was found, which was followed by a *feu de joie*, and the tremendous shouting of the whole line, "the child is found, the child is found;" the sound of which revibrated, in joyful echoes along the cliffs of the ridge, and over the tops of the gloomy forest below.

Barsley the happy finder of the child caught it up in his arms and wiped away the water from its drooping head and face, carrying it to a sunny place on an open spot on the side of the hill, where they stripped off its wet and orn clothes, and washed its body with spirits; then wrapped it in a dry warm flannel blanket; which had been prepared for the occasion, if happily they should find the object of their solicitude. It was almost insensible from cold, hunger, fright and weariness, but the spirits and warm blanket soon revived and brought it to its feeling, so that it was taken to its mother alive.

A Mr. McGary, now living in the town of Broome, Schoharie County, near Rightmyer's tavern, was the person who related the story to the author, and was present and had the pleasure of carrying, and of presenting the little innocent to the convulsed embrace of its almost phrenzied mother, whose joy at the sight and touch of her own hearts blood in that of her child, mocks the power of language to describe. Never shall I, said Mr. McGary, forget the ardor of the countenance of this mother, as she came running with the velocity of a spirit, to meet us, and to snatch the child to her bosom. She pressed it to her lips, turned round and round, shrieked and wept, and gazed upon it, while she kissed its pale lips and face, seeming not to know that the eyes of hundreds was upon her. *Never*, he repeated, shall I forget the interest, and happiness, the surrounding group manifested, who came running to behold, the extravagant happiness of the mother of the child. There were none who did not weep like children, at a sight of so much joy, expressed with such proper action, and unbounded gratitude to those who had been engaged in its recovery to her arms.

When the child was dressed and fed in a proper manner, and so recovered as to be able to answer questions, he said he wanted to go with brother to carry the horse to the pasture, but could not find it, when it got dark. He then got on the top of a rock where he lay down all night, during which he said he heard his mother call him. But it was supposed, that it was not the voice of his mother that he heard, but of some wild animal, the panther,

in all probability; the screams of which resembles the cries of a woman in distress. The child grew to be a man, and has often been heard to say, that he well remembered the horrors of that dismal night.

### WHEATON AND THE PANTHER.

Ben Wheaton was one of the *first* settlers on the waters of the Susquehannah, immediately after the war, a rough, uncultivated and primitive man. As many others of the same stamp and character, he subsisted chiefly by hunting, cultivating the land but sparingly, and in this way raised a numerous family amid the woods, in a half starved condition, and comparative nakedness. But as the Susquehannah country, rapidly increased in population, the hunting grounds of Wheaton were encroached upon; so that a chance with his smooth bore, among the deers and bears, was greatly lessened. On this account Wheaton removed from the Susquehannah Country, in Otsego County, to the more unsettled wilds of the Delaware, near a place yet known by the appellation of *Wait's Settlement*, where game was more plenty. The distance from where he made his home in the woods, through to the Susquehannah, was about fifteen miles and was one continued wilderness at that time. Through these woods this almost aboriginal hunter was often compelled to pass to the Susquehannah, for various necessities, and among the rest no small quantity of whiskey, as he was of very intemperate habits. On one of these visits, in the midst of summer, with his smooth bore always on his shoulder, knife, hatchet, &c. in their proper place, he had nearly penetrated the distance, when he became weary, and having come to the summit of a ridge (some time in the afternoon) which overlooks the vale of the Susquehannah, he selected a convenient place in the shade, as it was hot, for the rays of the sun from the west poured his sultry influence through all the forest, where lay down to rest awhile among the leaves, after having first took a drink from his pint bottle of green glass, and a mouthful of cold Johnney cake from his pocket.

In this situation he was soothed to drowsiness by the hum of insects, and the monotony of the passing winds among the foliage around him, when he soon unwarily fell asleep with his gun folded in his arms. But after a while he awoke from his sleep, and for a moment or two still lay in the same position, as it happened, without stirring, when he found that something had taken place while he had slept, which had situated him somewhat differently from the manner in which he first went to sleep. On reflecting a moment, he found he was entirely covered over, head and ears, with leaves and light stuff, occasioned as he now suspected, either by the sudden blowing of the wind, or by some wild animal. On which account he became a little disturbed in his mind, as he well knew the manners of the panther at that season of the year, when it hunts to support its young, and will often cover its prey with leaves and bring its whelps to the banquet. He therefore continued to lie perfectly still, as when he first awoke; he thought he heard the step of some kind of heavy animal near him; and knowing that if it were a Panther, the distance between himself and death could not be far, if he should attempt to rise up. Accordingly, as he suspected, after having lain a full minute, he now distinctly heard the retiring tread of the stealthy Panther, of which he had no doubt, from his knowledge of the creatures ways. It had taken but a few steps however, when it again stopped a longer time; still Wheaton continued his silent position, knowing his safety



depended much on this. Soon the tread was again heard, farther and farther off, till it entirely died away in the distance—but he still lay motionless a few minutes longer, when he ventured gently and cautiously to raise his head and cast an eye in the direction; the creature, whatever it was had gone, but could see nothing. He now rose up with a spring, for his blood had been running from his heart to the extremities, and back again, with uncommon velocity; all the while his ears had listened to the steps of the animal on the leaves and brush. He now saw plainly the marks of design among the leaves, and that he had been covered over, and that the paws of some creature had done it.

And as he suspected the Panther was the animal, he knew it would soon return to kill him, on which account he made haste to deceive it, and to put himself in a situation to give it a taste of the contents of old *smooth bore*. He now seized upon some pieces of old wood which lay all about, and placed as much as was equal to his own bulk, exactly where he had slept, and covered it over with leaves in the same manner the panther had done, and then sprang to a tree near by, into which he ascended, from whence he had a view a good distance about him, and especially in the direction the creature had gone. Here in the crotch of the tree he stood, with his gun resting across a limb, in the direction of the place where he had been left by the panther, looking sharply as far among the woods as possible, in the direction he expected the creature to return. But he had remained in this condition but a short time, and had barely thrust the ram-rod down the barrel of his piece, to be sure the charge was in her, and to examine her priming, and shut down the pan, slowly so that it should not snap, and thus make a noise, when his keen Indian eye, for such he had, caught a glimpse of a monstrous panther, leading warily two panther kittens toward her intended supper.

Now matters were hastening to a climax rapidly, when Wheaton or the panther must finish their hunting on the mountains of the Susquehannah, for if old *smooth bore* should flash in the pan, or miss her aim, the die would be cast, as a second load would be impossible ere her claws would have sundered his heart strings in the tree where he was, or if he should but partially wound her the same must have been his fate. During these thoughts the panther had hid her young under some brush, and had come within some thirty feet of the spot where she supposed her victim was still sleeping; and seeing all as she left it, she dropped down to a couching position, precisely as a cat, when about to spring on its prey. Now was seen the soul of the panther in its perfection; merging from the recesses of nature, hidden by the creator, along the whole nervous system, but resting chiefly in the brain, from whence it glared, in bright horror, from its burning eyes, curled in its strong and vibrating tail, pushed out its sharp white and elliptical fangs, from its broad and powerful paws, ready for rending, glittered on the points of its uncovered teeth, and smoked in rapid tissues of steam from its red and open jaws, while every hair of its long dun back stood erect in savage joy, denoting that the fatal and decisive moment of its leap had come.

Now the horrid nestling of its hinder claws, drawn under its belly was heard, and the bent ham-strings were seen but a half instant by Wheaton, from where he sat in his tree, when the tremendous leap was made. It rose on a long curve into the air, of about ten feet in the highest place, and from thence descending, it struck exactly where the breast head and bowels of its prey had lain, with a scream too horrible for description, when it tore to atoms the rotten wood, filling for several feet above it, the air with the leaves and light brush, the covering of the deception. But instantly the panther found herself cheated, and seemed to droop a little with disappointment, when however it resumed an erect posture, and surveyed quite around on

every side on a horizontal line, in search of its prey, but not discovering it, she cast a furious look aloft among the tops of the trees, when in a moment or two the eyes of Wheaton and the panther had met. Now for another leap; when she dropped for that purpose, but the bullet and two buck shot of old smooth bore, were too quick; as he lodged them all exactly in the brain of the savage monster, and stretched her dead on the spot where the hunter had slept but a short time before, in the soundness of a mountain dream.

He had marked the spot where her young were hidden, which, at the report of the gun were frightened and ran up a tree. Wheaton now came down and found the panther to measure, from the end of its nose to the point of its tail, eight feet six inches in length; a creature sufficiently strong to have carried him off on a full run, had he had fallen into its power. He now reloaded and went to the tree where her kittens, or the young panthers were, and soon brought them down from their grapple among the limbs, companions for their conquered and slain parent.

Wheaton dismantled them of their hides, and hastened away, lest some other encounter, before the night should set in, might overtake him, of a similar character, when the disadvantage of darkness might decide the victory in a way more advantageously to the roamers of the forest. Of this feat Ben Wheaton never ceased to boast; reciting it as the most appalling passage of his hunting life. The animal had scented him while asleep, and had found him as she supposed; intending to give her young a specimen of the manner of their future life, or if this is too much for the mind of a dumb animal, she intended at least to give them a supper.

This circumstance was all that saved his life, or the panther would have leapt upon him at first, and have tore him to pieces, instead of covering him with leaves, as it did, for the sake of her young. The panther is a ferocious and almost untameable animal, whose nature and habits are the same as the cat; except that the nature and powers of this domestic creature, are, in the panther, immensely magnified, in strength and voracity. It is in the American forest, what the tiger is in Africa and India, a dangerous and savage animal; the terror of all other creatures, as well as of the Indian and the white man.



### LA FAYETTE AND THE INDIAN GIRL.

[We give the following story of La Fayette and the Aboriginal Girl of the far west, from Levasseur's Journal, because we think the incidents of the life of so great a man, as was the Marquis La Fayette, cannot be too often repeated in the ears of Americans, as by it the memory of that philanthropic and greatly patriotic Frenchman is enstamped on the memory of the nation and the historic page of the country.]

I was still among the Indians, questioning the hunter as to the situation and force of their tribes, when I saw the secretary of the governor of Louisiana, Mr. Caire, approach, who came to propose that I should go with him to visit an Indian encampment at a very short distance from the village.— After about a quarter of an hour's walk, we arrived at a fence, which we climbed, and behind which two horses attracted our attention, by the noise of the bells hung round their necks. A little further on, the pass enlarging, formed a delightful little valley, in the middle of which some huts of bark were raised in a half circle. This was the Indian camp we sought. After a minute examination of this little camp, we were about to leave it, when

I was arrested on the border of the streamlet which ran through it, by the sight of a small mill-wheel which appeared to have been thrown on the bank by the rapidity of the current. I took it up and placed it where I thought it had been originally put by the children, on two stones a little above the water, and the current striking the wings, made it turn rapidly. This puerility (which probably would have passed from my memory, if on the same evening it had not placed me before the Indians in a situation sufficiently extraordinary) greatly excited the attention of the old woman, who, by her gestures, expressed to us a lively satisfaction.

On returning to Kaskaskia, we found M. de Syon, who, on the invitation of Gen. Lafayette, left Washington city with us, to visit the southern and western states. Like us, he had just made an excursion into the neighborhood, and appeared quite joyous at the discovery he had made. He had met, in the midst of the forest, at the head of a troop of Indians, a pretty young woman who spoke French very well, and expressed herself with a grace at which he appeared as much astonished as we were. She had asked him if it was true that Lafayette was at Kaskaskia, and on his replying affirmatively, she manifested a great desire to see him. "I always carry with me," said she to M. de Syon, "a relique that is very dear to me. I would wish to show it to him. It would prove to him that his name is not less venerated in the midst of our tribes than among the white Americans for whom he fought." And in speaking thus, she drew from her bosom a little pouch which enclosed a letter carefully wrapped in several pieces of paper. "It is from Lafayette," said she, "he wrote it to my father a long time since, and my father, when he died, left it to me as the most precious thing he possessed." At the sight of this letter, M. de Syon proposed to the Indian girl to go with him to Kaskaskia, assuring her that General Lafayette would be very much pleased to see her. But this proposition seemed to embarrass her, and under various pretexts she refused to come. "However," she added, "if you have any thing to say to me this evening, you will find me in my camp, which is close by the village. Any one can direct you the way, for I am well known at Kaskaskia. My name is Mary."

Afterwards I spoke to Gen. Lafayette of the meeting with the young Indian girl; and from the desire he manifested to see her, I left the table with M. de Syon, at the moment when the company began to exchange patriotic toasts, and sought me a guide to Mary's camp. We soon arrived at the middle of the camp, which was lighted by a large fire, around which a dozen Indians were squatted, preparing their supper. They received us with cordiality, and as soon as they were informed of the object of our visit, one of them conducted us to Mary's hut, whom we found sleeping on a bison skin. At the voice of M. de Syon, which she recognised, she arose and listened attentively to the invitation from Gen. Lafayette to come to Kaskaskia. She seemed quite flattered by it, but said, before deciding to accompany us, she wished to mention it to her husband. While she was consulting with him, I heard a piercing cry, and turning round, I saw near me the old woman I had found alone in the camp in the morning. She had just recognised me by the light of the fire, and designated me to her companions, who, quitting immediately their occupations, rushed round me in a circle, and began to dance with demonstrations of great joy and gratitude. Their tawny and nearly naked bodies, their faces fantastically painted, their expressive gesticulations, the reflection of the fire, which gave a red tinge to all the surrounding objects, every thing gave to this scene something of an infernal aspect, and I fancied myself for an instant in the midst of demons. Mary, witnessing my embarrassment, put an end to it by order-

ing the dance to cease, and then explained to me the *honours* which they had just rendered me. "When we wish to know if an enterprise we meditate will be happy, we place in a rivulet a small wheel slightly supported on two stones. If the wheel turns during three suns without being thrown down, the augury is favorable; but if the current carries it away, and throws it upon the bank, it is a certain proof that our project is not approved by the Great Spirit, unless, however, a stranger comes to replace the little wheel before the end of the third day. You are this stranger who has restored our *manitou* and our hopes, and this is your title to be thus celebrated among us." In pronouncing these last words, an ironical smile played on her lips, which caused me to doubt her faith in the *manitou*. "You do not appear to be very much convinced," said I to her, "of the efficacy of the service which I have rendered you in raising the *manitou*?" She silently shook her head. Then raising her eyes, "I have been taught," said she, "to place my confidence higher. All my hopes are in the God I have been taught to believe in—the God of the Christians."

I had at first been much astonished to hear an Indian woman speak French so well, and I was not less so in learning that she was a Christian. Mary perceived it, and to put an end to my surprise, she related to me her history, while her husband and those who were to accompany her to Kaskaskia, hastily took their supper of maize, cooked in milk. She informed me that her father, who was a chief of one of the nations who inhabited the shores of the great lakes of the north, had formerly fought with a hundred of his followers under the orders of Lafayette, when the latter commanded an army on the frontiers—that he had acquired much glory, and gained the friendship of the Americans. A long time after, that is, about twenty years ago, he left the shores of the great lakes with some of his warriors, his wife and daughter; and after having marched a long time, he established himself on the shores of the river Illinois. "I was very young then, but have not yet, however, forgotten the horrible sufferings we endured during this long journey, made in a rigorous winter, across a country peopled by nations with whom we were unacquainted. They were such that my poor mother, who nearly always carried me on her shoulders, already well loaded with baggage, died under them some days after our arrival. My father placed me under the care of another woman who also emigrated with us, and occupied himself in securing the tranquil possession of the lands on which we had come to establish ourselves, by forming alliances with our new neighbours. The Kickapoos were those who received us best, and we soon considered ourselves as forming a part of their nation. The year following, my father was chosen by them, with some from among themselves, to go and regulate some affairs of the nation with the agent of the United States, residing here at Kaskaskia. He wished that I should be of the company; for although the Kickapoos had shown themselves very generous and hospitable towards him he feared that some war might break out in his absence, as he well knew the intrigues of the English to excite the Indians against the Americans. This same apprehension induced him to accede to the request made by the American agent to leave me in his family, to be educated with his infant daughter. My father had much esteem for the whites of that great nation for whom he had formerly fought. He never had cause to complain of them, and he who offered to take charge of me inspired him with great confidence by the frankness of his manners, and above all by the fidelity with which he treated the affairs of the Indians. He therefore left me, promising to return to see me every year after the great winter's hunt. He came, in fact, several times afterwards; and I, not-

withstanding the disagreeableness of a sedentary life, grew up answering the expectations of my careful benefactor and his wife. I became attached to their daughter, who grew up with me, and the truths of the Christian religion easily supplanted in my mind the superstition of my fathers, whom I had scarcely known. Yet I confess to you, notwithstanding the influence of religion and civilization on my youthful heart, the impressions of infancy were not entirely effaced. If the pleasure of wandering conducted me into the shady forest, I breathed more freely, and it was with reluctance that I returned home. When, in the cool of the evening, seated in the door of my adopted father's habitation, I heard in the distance, through the silence of the night, the piercing voice of the Indians, rallying to return to camp, I started with a thrill of joy, and my feeble voice imitated the voice of the savage with a facility that affrighted my young companion. And when occasionally some warriors came to consult my benefactor in regard to their treaties, or hunters to offer him a part of the produce of their chase, I was always the first to run to meet and welcome them. I testified my joy to them by every imaginable means, and I could not avoid admiring and wishing for their simple ornaments, which appeared to me far preferable to the brilliant decorations of the whites.

"In the meanwhile, for five years my father had not appeared at the period of the return from the winter's hunting,—but a warrior whom I had often seen with him, came and found me one evening at the entrance of the forest, and said to me, 'Mary, thy father is old and feeble, he has been unable to follow us here—but he wishes to see thee once more before he dies, and he has charged me to conduct thee to him.' In saying these words he forcibly took my hand, and dragged me with him. I had not even time to reply to him, nor even take any resolution, before we were at a great distance, and I saw well that there was no part left for me but to follow him. We marched nearly all night, and at the dawn of day we arrived at a bark hut, built in the middle of a little valley. Here I saw my father, his eyes turned towards the just rising sun. His face was painted as for battle. His tomahawk, ornamented with many scalps, was beside him—he was calm and silent; as an Indian who awaiteth death. As soon as he saw me he drew from a pouch a paper wrapped with care in a very dry skin, and gave it to me, requesting that I should preserve it as a most precious thing. 'I wished to see thee once more before dying,' said he, 'and to give thee this paper, which is the most powerful charm (*manitou*) which thou canst employ with the whites to interest them in thy favor; for all those to whom I have shown it, have manifested towards me a particular attachment. I received it from a great French warrior, whom the English dreaded as much as the Americans loved, and with whom I fought in my youth.' After these words my father was silent; next morning he expired. Sciakapa, the name of the warrior who came for me, covered the body of my father with branches of trees, and took me back to my guardian."

Here Mary suspended her narrative, and presented to me a letter a little darkened by time, but in good preservation. "Stay," said she to me, smiling, "you see that I have faithfully complied with the charge of my father,—I have taken great care of his *manitou*." I opened the letter, and recognised the signature and hand writing of Gen. Lafayette. It was dated at Head Quarters, Albany, June, 1778, after the northern campaign, and addressed to Panisciowa, an Indian chief of one of the Six Nations, to thank him for the courageous manner in which he had served the American cause.

"Well," said Mary, "now that you know me well enough to introduce me to General Lafayette, shall we go to him that I may also greet him whom my father revered as the courageous warrior and the friend of our nations?"—"Willingly," I replied, "but it seems to me that you have promised to inform

us in what manner, after having tasted for some time the sweets of civilization, you came to the rude and savage life of the Indians?" At this question Mary looked downwards and seemed troubled. However, after a slight hesitation, she resumed in a lower tone:—"After the death of my father, Sciakapa often returned to see me. We soon became attached to each other. He did not find it difficult to determine me to follow him into the forest, where I became his wife. The resolution very much afflicted my benefactors. But when they saw that I found myself happy, they pardoned me; and each year during all the time that our encampment is established near Kaskaskia, I rarely pass a day without going to see them. If you wish, we can visit them, for their house is close by our way, and you will see, by the reception they will give me, that they retain their esteem and friendship."

Mary pronounced these last words with a degree of pride, which proved to us that she feared that we might have formed a bad opinion of her, on account of her flight from the home of her benefactors with Sciakapa. We accepted her proposition, and she gave the signal for departure. At her call her husband and eight warriors presented themselves to escort us. M. de Syon offered her his arm, and we began our march. We were all very well received by the family of Mr. Mesnerd; but Mary, above all, received the most tender marks of affection from the persons of the household. Mr. Mesnerd, Mary's adopted father, was at Kaskaskia, as one of the committee charged with the reception of Lafayette, and Mrs. Mesnerd asked us if we would undertake to conduct her daughter to the ball which she herself was prevented from attending by indisposition. We assented with pleasure; and while Mary assisted Miss Mesnerd to complete her toilet, we seated ourselves round a great fire in the kitchen.

After a little time, we took leave of Mrs. Mesnerd, and found our Indian escort, who had waited patiently for us at the door, and who resumed their position near us at some distance in front, to guide and protect our march, as if we had been crossing an enemy's country. The night was quite dark, but the temperature was mild, and the fire flies illuminated the atmosphere around us. M. de Syon conducted Miss Mesnerd, and I gave my arm to Mary, who, notwithstanding the darkness, walked with a confidence and lightness which only a forest life could produce. The fire flies attracted and interested me much; for although this was not the first time I had observed them, I had never before seen them in such numbers. I asked Mary if these insects, which, from their appearance, seem so likely to astonish the imagination, had never given place among the Indians to popular beliefs or tales. "Not among the nations of these countries, where every year we are familiarized with their great numbers," said she to me, "but I have heard that among the tribes of the north they commonly believe that they are the souls of departed friends who return to console them, or demand the performance of some promise. I even know several ballads on this subject. One of them appears to have been made a long time since in a nation which lived further north, and no longer exists. It is by songs that great events and popular traditions are ordinarily preserved among us; and this ballad, which I have often heard sung by the young girls of our tribe, leaves no doubt as to the belief of some Indians concerning the fire fly." I asked her to sing me this song, which she did with much grace.—Although I did not comprehend the words, which were Indian, I observed a great harmony in their arrangement, and in the very simple music in which they were sung an expression of deep melancholy.

When she had finished the ballad, I asked her if she could not translate it for me into French, so that I might comprehend the sense. "With difficulty," she said, "for I have always found great obstacles to translating exactly the

expressions of our Indians into French when I have served them as interpreter with the whites. But I will try."

Mary ended her ballad, and I expressed to her my thanks as we arrived at the bridge of Kaskaskia. There Sciakapa collected his escort, said a few words to his wife, and left us to enter the village alone. We approached the house of Mr. Morrison at which the ball was given to Gen. Lafayette. I then felt that Mary trembled. Her trouble was so great that she could not conceal it from me. I asked the cause. "If you would spare me a great mortification," she said, "you will not conduct me among the ladies of Kaskaskia.—They are now without doubt in their most brilliant dresses, and the coarseness of my clothes will inspire them with contempt and pity—two sentiments which equally affect me. Besides, I know that they blame me for having renounced the life of the whites, and I feel little at ease in their presence." I promised what she desired, and she became assured. Arrived at Mr. Morrison's, I conducted her into a lower chamber, and went to the hall to inform Gen. Lafayette that the young Indian girl awaited him below. He hastened down and several of the committee with him. He saw and heard Mary with pleasure, and could not conceal his emotion on recognising his letter, and observing with what holy veneration it had been preserved during nearly half a century in a savage nation, among whom he had not even supposed his name had ever penetrated. On her part, the daughter of Panisciowa expressed with vivacity the happiness she enjoyed in seeing him along with whom her father had the honor to fight for the good American cause.

After a half hour's conversation, Mary manifested a wish to retire, and I accompanied her to the bridge, where I replaced her under the care of Sciakapa and his escort, and bade them farewell.



### A CONFLICT FOR LIFE, BETWEEN THREE INDIANS AND ONE WHITE MAN.

Within a half mile of a Fort, which the inhabitants of a certain place had built on the Ohio river, in the time of the Revolution, there was a log house, which the owner, with his wife and two little children, had deserted for the Fort, to avoid death or captivity by the Indians, who were skulking around in all directions. But on a certain day, for some cause or other, the gate of the Fort was for a few minutes left open, at which time those two children went out unseen, and made off for their former home. In a few minutes, however, the parents missed them; when on opening the gate to find them, they were no where to be seen. The father now took his rifle and pursued after them, greatly fearing that they were already in the hands of the Indians—but on coming to the house there they were, safe and sound. He now told them to flee for their lives to the Fort again, and by no means not to speak or cry, or the Indians would hear them. They started off, while their father clambered on the corner of the house to watch the woods in the direction of the Fort, till the children should arrive, and some one take them in. But while in this situation, he discovered before the children had gone half the distance, that no less than three savages were running swiftly to intercept them. The father now dropt down from his lookout position and flew toward the spot, to save them if possible. This was instantly discovered by the Indians, who now abandoned their first design to capture the man. In order to do this, they severally betook themselves to as many trees, for safety, which compelled the white man to do the same. But as the Indians

found themselves too near together to hit their victim, they tried to spread themselves more in a circle, so as to hit him, which as one of them attempted to do, lost his life by the shot of the white man. At the same instant, another of them who had sprang off in the opposite direction, and did not know that one of their number was no more, kept darting on from tree to tree, till the white man had reloaded, when he also fell from the second shot of the white marksman. The remaining Indian having discharged his piece, at the very instant when the white man fired last, but missed his aim, now rushed on to grapple for the precious life, as both their guns were now empty. The Indian being much the most powerful, easily threw the white man to the ground, when he posted himself firmly on his breast and drawing his knife, began to flourish it about his head, in token of death by scalping. But ere he proceeded to this he seemed to delay for the purpose of grinning horribly over his victim, and of gently stabbing him in the breast, by way of prelude to excite his terror. But while the Indian was thus employed, the white man observed that the handle of the Indian's knife was extraordinary long, and extended out at least three inches beyond his hand. On this he was now determined to seize as on a lost hope. A favorable position of it, as the Indian kept on his flourishing, was presented, when the all important *grab* was made, which succeeded; and as he drew it with violence through the Indian's hand, cut off all his fingers; while in the same instant, the whole knife, handle and all, were driven quite into the owner's lungs entering in on his left side, when he rolled away, and fell over to the ground, a helpless and dying Indian.

The white man now crept out and fled, lest some other encounter might yet take him off ere he could reach the Fort.



### MASSACRE OF FOURTEEN PRISONERS, BY ESTHER AN INDIAN QUEEN, AT THE BATTLE OF WYOMING, DURING THE REVOLUTION.

The account which we are about to relate in the following story, is one which can scarcely be equalled in atrocity, treachery and cold blooded butchery, in the annals of war and animosity among men, as it is the more appalling having been perpetrated by a *woman*, an Indian Queen, of one of the tribes of the Alleghany reservation which has since so been named.

The dreadful battle of Wyoming, in which no less than one hundred and fifty women were made widows, and six hundred children orphans, had raged some hours, when at a certain point, namely, on the left wing the savages, were too powerful for the whites, as they had taken advantage of a mistake our men had made, in misunderstanding the word of command. This point happened to be near the river, which was the Susquehannah; where about twenty of our men plunged into the water, with the view of saving themselves by swimming over, and thus escaping. But the Indians and Tories had seen this manœuvre, and flew to the spot. But instead of firing among them in the water as they could have done with mortal effect, they offered them quarters, if they would come out and give themselves up without further resistance.

Trusting to this promise, fifteen of them did return and gave themselves up prisoners of war, while the others, five or six in number made their escape in a wonderful manner amid the bullets of the enemy. The fifteen prisoners were now seized by as many powerful Indians; but were not tied, the reason of which will soon appear. Esther, a hedious squaw, titled a queen or female chief,



probably on account of being the daughter of a chief, being not far distant, from the place of their capture ; a yell of the Indians of a peculiar note brought her to the spot, when they were immediately led a short distance from the shore into the woods, to a clear and open space. Here they were requested to sit down in a circle, not knowing for what purpose, as they trusted to the promise of receiving quarters, and did not therefore apprehend any danger ; imagining it to be some ceremony peculiar to the savages. As they sat in this circle a strong Indian took his position behind each prisoner except one which was a mere boy, and placed his brawny hands upon each shoulder, which as afterwards appeared was to prevent them from rising up and attempting to make their escape, when they should come know the reason why they had been thus seated in a circle. The reason of this ceremony now soon appeared, for as soon as all was ready, the queen approached with a large club in her hand, in a silent stealthy manner, up behind them, and drawing back her club she brought it down with all her might upon the head of her victim ; when his brains flew in every direction ; he fell back with a groan, and was dead. She now stepped to the next, on her right hand, and executed the same horrid blow on the next, with the same effect as on the first. Among the prisoners was a lad by the name of William Buck, the boy to whom we have just alluded, about fifteen years old, who on account of his youth was not held down by an Indian like the other prisoners. This boy, when he saw what the queen was at and witnessed the blow which broke the skulls of his companions and heard the death groan of the victim and saw him fall back a lifeless corpse, he became frightened, and springing to his feet fled with the speed of an arrow, crying piteously as he ran, aiming to hide himself in the woods if possible, yet without hope ; as he knew some Indian could soon overtake him ; but still he run on, though he run in despair. His fears were soon realized, for a swift Indian soon overtook him ; but instead of killing him on the spot, as he no doubt expected, he began to soothe him, saying he should not be hurt, as he was but a little white headed boy. This was said in the hearing of a Mr. Hammond of whom we shall soon speak. It is not impossible but the Indian meant to save the boy, and take him for his own ; but as he led him along, there stepped another Indian behind the lad and sunk the blade of his hatchet to the handle in his brains, when he was laid dead in his place in the circle, which he had but a moment before occupied alive.

During this short period the work of death still went on, when soon there was but two left of the number which was fourteen men and one boy. One of these was a man of extraordinary strength and activity, Libeus Hammond by name, who seeing now but one man between himself and eternity, resolved if possible to rescue himself, but if not to die fighting, and to sell his life as dearly to the enemy as possible. At that awful moment too there came the vision of his wife and little ones at home, in a glance before him, which nerved him to desperation, when he sprang forward from under the hands of the Indian behind him ; and gaining his feet turned round at the same instant, and gave him a blow with his fist, as quick as powerful : and laid his Indian prostrate at some distance. He then sprang over him and with the violence of a frightened Buffalo, shot off on a straight line into the deep woods, running for the precious life. But two Indians instantly pursued, whom he soon perceived gained rapidly upon him, from whose tomahawks he knew there was no escape if suffered to overtake him. Stratagem, therefore, was to be resorted to as his only safety. Accordingly, just as they were about to reach him on full spring, having gained the further end of a tangled kind of a thicket, darted suddenly out of a straight course, in which he was running, and tacked off on another direction, and made his escape, while his pursuers were pitching and tumbling headlong over each other, occasioned by their own velocity, and an attempt to stop too suddenly ; they became confused and no doubt hurt, and thus they lost him. Had this man died the fate of his fellows could never have been known ; the dark and horrid transactions could never have become an item of the history of those times of blood and carnage, as is now the fact. This account was derived from a man who was in the battle of Wyoming, and is still living near Tawanda, the county seat of Bradford, Pa., and is, therefore, to be relied on as true.

**FINIS.**





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